

Editorial

Colour vision

Peter: Did you hear about the Irishman* whose library burnt down?

Olivia: No - what happened?

Peter: Both books were destroyed!

Olivia: My goodness!

Peter: Worse still, one hadn't even been coloured in!

* in the interests of political correctness, substitute male or female versions of Canadian, Newfoundlander, Pole, Kerryman, and other suitable ethnic variants here to suit local conditions.

2006 is an important bicentenary for the Ulster Medical Society. In 1806, the Belfast Medical Society was founded and the later formation of the Belfast Clinical and Pathological Society in 1853, allowed amalgamation of both societies to form the current Ulster Medical Society in 1862. The vision of the early founders of the Belfast Medical Society, was far sighted, and some historical articles later this year will deal with aspects of this to commemorate the bicentenary. Dr John Logan, the Ulster Medical Societys' archivist, documents the history of the formation and publication of the 'transactions of the Ulster Medical Society' – the predecessor of the Ulster Medical Journal¹ in this issue.

The Ulster Medical Journal itself has had two changes this year – this is the first volume that has officially exceeded two issues since the shortage of paper during the war caused reduction of the four issues to two.² We hope that the three issues planned for this volume will become a permanent feature and we aim (costs permitting) to have some additional content available electronically on the website to enhance the paper edition. We do not know if a paper version of the journal will continue with the advent of digital flexible hand held optical reading devices (electronic books), and our colour vision (*figure*) of the future journal in 2106 is hard to predict. Professor David Hadden, a former editor of the journal outlines the interesting history of the visionary editors and assistant editors of the journal to date, and includes some personal insights illustrating their careers.³

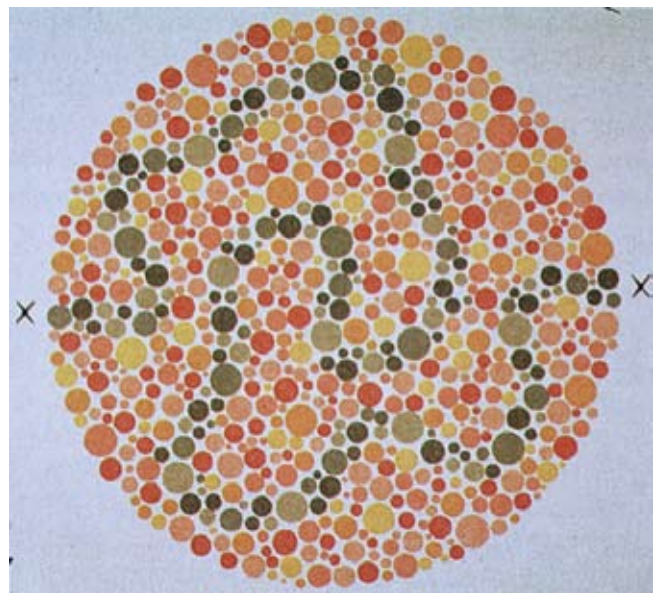


Figure. Ishihara chart showing red-green colour blindness.

The second change is the inclusion of colour for the first time throughout the journal. Cost savings in the delivery of electronic copy to the printers have allowed us to increase the number of issues and provide colour at minimal extra expense and we hope you enjoy the end result. Two colour plates appeared in the early history of the journal in a paper by TC Dodds in 1939 on the use of the recently invented Finlay colour photographic process for pathology slides.⁴ The war again intervened and stopped any further advance in this direction. The next colour plate was included by Dr JA Weaver in his annual

oration in 1984 when he provided funding for a photograph of a painting by Sargent, in 1905, of the medical faculty of Johns Hopkins University.⁵ The picture included William Osler, who left Hopkins shortly afterwards to become Professor of Medicine in Oxford University, England, and who helped found the Association of Physicians in 1906. The association celebrates its centenary this year.

Hopefully the changes will improve the quality and readability of the journal. Keep the good papers coming in with colour figures and illustrations and a happy and colourful new year to you all!

Patrick J Morrison, Honorary Editor.

REFERENCES

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2. Morrison PJ. We are like Dwarfs standing [or sitting] upon the shoulders of giants... *Ulster Med J* 2005; **74(2)**: 73-4.
3. Hadden DR. The Editors of the Ulster Medical Journal. *Ulster Med J* 2006; **75(1)**: 5-10.
4. Dodds TC. Colour photography as applied to medicine with special reference to the Finlay colour process. *Ulster Med J* 1939; **8(2)**: 112-6.
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REFEREES CONSULTED – 2005

We thank our referees over the last year for reviewing manuscripts promptly and efficiently.

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